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Speech to Young Democrats

Max S. Baucus

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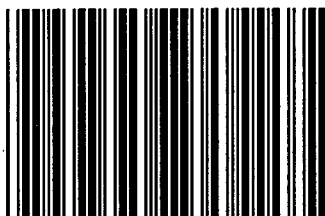
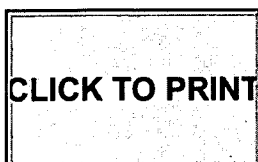
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BAUCUS

SPEECH TO YOUNG DEMOCRATS

WASHINGTON, D.C.
NOVEMBER 16, 1985

It is a privilege and a pleasure to address you today. You are the future of the Democratic Party.

As a Democrat, you are a member of this nation's one true national party -- the one party that dedicates itself to representing all the nation's regions, all of its races, ethnic groups, and religions, and both of its sexes. The one party that strives to represent all the nation's economic groups -- rich and poor and middle class; factory workers and farm workers; blue, white and new collar workers.

Our differences of backgrounds cause us to have different outlooks and persuasions and to disagree. But our party is united in a strong sense of destiny, and in optimism about the future. Above all, we are united in a belief that the Democratic Party, the party we love, is the one party that truly represents the common person, and gives him or her a voice in his or her government.

As a Democrat, you belong to the oldest political party in the world. But while our party is old in years, it is youthful in hopes and dreams for the future -- and its willingness to meet the challenges of the future. As Democrats, we know that the greatest threat to this great nation comes not from foreign foes, but from the lack of hope and dreams. Prosperity alone is not enough when there is no equal opportunity to share it.

In the Republican world of corporate boardrooms, budget cuts and budget deficits, and Reaganomics, the majority of Americans have been forgotten.

Hundreds of thousands of factory workers will never see their jobs come back.

For five years, women have witnessed an Administration indifferent, even hostile to their Constitutional rights.

For five years, blacks, Hispanics and other minorities have again been pushed educationally, economically, and socially to the back of the bus.

The nation's elderly have lived the past 5 years in continuous fear of living their golden years without adequate income and without dignity.

And even the great American middle class is being forgotten.

Standing in contrast to the Republican Party is the Democratic Party -- the party of the majority of Americans. It was one of the nation's founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson, who also founded the Democratic Party. And it was Jefferson who established the ideal for this party with his charge that the purpose of government is to provide for the health, happiness, and well being of the people.

Recently some of the great Democratic traditions have come under attack. They have been demeaned as "spending programs," and have been blamed for the current budget deficits. Yet \$200 billion deficits are a legacy of the Reagan Administration, not of Democratic traditions.

We Democrats never once supposed that these programs were perfect. Of course, some of them had shortcomings -- but when we erred, we erred on the side of trying to do something -- to build, to achieve, and to create. The great Franklin Roosevelt pointed out that Dante wrote that Divine Justice weighs the sins of the cold blooded and the sins of the warm-blooded on different scales. Said President Roosevelt, "Better the occasional faults of a government living in the spirit of charity, than the consistent omissions of a government frozen in the ice of its own indifference."

Avoiding indifference doesn't come easy and it doesn't come cheap. The challenge is to ensure the results are worth the cost.

The once isolated farmer who now runs his house and farm on electricity thanks to the TVA -- ask him if that Democratic tradition was worth it.

American workers who now enjoy a decent standard of living because they were given the right to unionize, and work in safer and healthier conditions because of occupational safety and health programs -- ask him if that Democratic tradition was worth it.

The small businessman in need of capital in order to get off his feet in an economy dominated by chain stores and corporations -- ask him if that Democratic tradition was worth it.

Elderly and disabled people who now live on Social Security rather than a handout -- ask them if that Democratic tradition is worth it.

The Democratic Party is not indifferent. We have done something to eliminate ignorance, poverty, and bigotry. And we will continue to do something to build a better tomorrow for all Americans.

Dreams? Of course these are dreams. But as John F. Kennedy pointed out, they are "all part of the American Dream."

Republican programs are crushing that dream for millions of Americans by driving this nation to the international poorhouse. This Administration has accumulated more federal debt in just 5 years than the previous 39 administrations did in the entire history of the country. Last year, the government ran the largest deficit in the history of the United States. And for the first time since 1914, the United States is a debtor nation.

This is the Reagan Revolution? This is Republican prosperity?

What this could become is the 1930s all over again. Reaganomics is not a new idea -- it is an old idea. It is Hoovernomics under a new name!

The Republican Party is playing poker with this nation's future. Despite its claims to the contrary, it has lost the first hand and is betting this country into hock.

With their budget proposals, Republican have seriously undermined medical and scientific research and education. And they have been grossly unfair and unjust to most American families.

To counter these Republican policies which even Vice President George Bush once labeled "economic madness," and to clean up this mess, we as Democrats need to present "new ideas."

While inspired by the ideas and ideals of past great Democrats, we need not be bound by their policies. We must carry on another Democratic tradition -- developing "new ideas." It was

President Woodrow Wilson who gave us the "New Freedom." It was Franklin Roosevelt who brought forth the "New Deal." And it was President Kennedy who promoted the "New Frontier."

In contrast to Republicans, Democrats have a vision for the future. Democrats know that as a nation we cannot reach our potential without well-trained and educated people; without the information that comes from basic research; without the very tools that have helped us become what we are today.

We are determined to strengthen this nation's ability to compete in global markets, again, and to see that our children have the best education, again. We are determined to stress technological research so that America's working people will have jobs, again.

And we are determined to stop exporting American jobs overseas and to restore this nation's manufacturing capability before it is too late.

We must address the deficit problem in a way that is fair and inspires the faith of our people. And in a way that reassures all Americans about the fairness of our government.

We Democrats will continue to utilize, and expand if need be, the creative abilities of the federal government. I know that there are those who say that Democrats turn everything over to the government. This cry is raised every time we attempt to promote the interests of the people rather than the Pentagon or some giant corporation. Democrats do not believe in big government; we believe in effective government. As John Kennedy said, "effective governmental action...is the only way that the United States is going to maintain its freedom; it's the only way we're going to move ahead."

And we must move ahead again.

With these visions, and with our old ideals and new ideas, we can serve the American people as we strengthen our control of the House of Representatives and regain control of the Senate in 1986, and when we capture the White House in 1988.

I look at our party from the perspective of Senate leadership. I know our party has remained the party of innovation, of compassion, of accomplishment, and of progress for these many years because of bright, committed, conscientious, patriotic, intelligent young persons like you. And the Democratic Party's use of young Democrats has inspired other young persons to joining our efforts. It has been a non-stop process of renewal and reinvigoration.

I want you to know how vital are the ideas and energy and vision that you add to us older Democrats.

You are the next generation of leadership for the Democratic Party and for the nation -- and, consequently, for the world.

I applaud you for your commitment and drive. I urge you to continue to invest in the future of your Party and nation. We need your help and will be depending on your minds and your energy.

Thank you for inviting me to join you. I hope your meeting is successful in every respect.